

HCS SCS SB 296 -- EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

SPONSOR: Griesheimer (Sutherland)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on General Laws by a vote of 10 to 0.

This substitute requires that changes to the state school district accreditation standards take effect no less than two years after their adoption by rule.

The substitute also changes the standards for teacher certification. Currently, teacher certificates include three levels, the first two of which are steps to a continuous professional certificate, renewable every 10 years. The substitute replaces the three-level system with a two-level system: an initial four-year certificate and a career continuous professional certificate. The substitute grants current certificate holders who qualify for a career continuous professional certificate as of August 28, 2003, such a certificate as their current certificates expire. The substitute contains professional development requirements for both levels of certification. For the initial certificate, requirements include participation in a beginning teacher assistance program and two years of mentoring.

The substitute also deletes references to the five-year provisional certification granted to experienced teachers with out-of-state certificates and grants a license to validly certified teachers from other states hired to teach in this state, commensurate with their experience, upon completion of a background check, if the certificate holder annually completes the requirements of the State Board of Education for that level of certification. Currently, holders of a doctor of philosophy degree may be granted a certificate under certain conditions; the substitute replaces the term with "doctoral degree." The substitute permits a fee to be charged for initial certificates not to exceed the cost of their issuance plus background check. Enticement of a child and attempting to entice a child are added to the list of crimes for which licenses are revoked.

FISCAL NOTE: Not available at time of printing.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that school districts need time to prepare for changes in accreditation. Accreditation happens on a five-year cycle, so two years to prepare for changes is a reasonable amount of time.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Griesheimer; and Missouri State Teachers Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst